

THE NATIONAL RIFLE
ASSOCIATION

Mr. CAMPBELL. Mr. President, I rise today to speak briefly on a matter that has caused me great personal concern and that has rapidly been allowed to escalate into another tragic example of political class warfare in the United States.

I am speaking of the overzealous and counterproductive rhetoric of extremists and extremism. Most recently, the National Rifle Association has provided an example of the worst in political debate.

At this time, Mr. President, I include a letter I recently received from Mr. Jack Sands, of Waldorf, MD. Mr. Sands is typical of many former NRA members who have seen its leadership become more violent in its rhetoric over the years. Addressing his letter to Wayne R. LaPierre, he states:

I hereby resign as a life member of the NRA. Enclosed is my membership card dated 1973. Please remove my name from all mailing lists. I have chosen today to take this action, since this is Peace Officers Memorial Day when we pay tribute to the nearly 14,000 American law enforcement officers who died in the line of duty. As a retired Federal officer, I no longer wish to be affiliated with the NRA.

Sincerely,

Jack M. Sands.

I commend the national leadership for its courage in apologizing for its most recent example of political hatred. The comments circulated by the NRA were both offensive and irresponsible. I commend them for their apology, but I condemn them, Mr. President, for not having the good sense to exercise responsible restraint in the first place.

There is a popular ad campaign that says "I'm the NRA," and we are shown a normal, everyday, person. The message from that ad is that the NRA is just a rank-and-file, next-door-neighbor organization.

Well, Mr. President, there are two NRA's. There is the leadership of the NRA and there is the rank and file reflected in this memo sent to several Members. This is their way of lobbying Congress. It is a picture of a gun-toting person speaking about "jack-booted BATF thugs."

Mr. President, I was in the NRA but I quit a year ago. So did some of our friends and colleagues like Congressman BREWSTER who dropped off the board, and Congressmen JOHN DINGELL and Tom Foley. Just like former President George Bush.

It is time for the rank and file membership of the NRA to take back their association. Otherwise, Mr. President, they will be tarred with the same brush as those few, but vocal, zealots who have initiated this most destructive campaign of hatred, innuendo, fear, animosity, and intimidation which are the NRA leadership's favorite tools for lobbying elected officials.

Those who preach hatred and disrespect for the law bear some responsibility if their message of hatred con-

tributes to lawless acts of others. Likewise, those in the Government who act with arrogance or disrespect for the rights of our law abiding citizens—regardless of the political or social beliefs of the citizens—will bear some responsibility if their official behavior contributes to an atmosphere of distrust and animosity toward the Government.

There is no excuse to justify vigilante-ism or open lawlessness. It is absolutely inexcusable and irresponsible for a national organization—such as the NRA—which claims it speaks for a great number of our constituents—to openly promote lawlessness or disrespect for our law enforcement personnel.

That is precisely what our system of government was created to avoid. Political debate, discussion, recall, referendum, and involvement is how we keep our Government responsive to the needs of the people in the traditional and acceptable way.

I can tell you, Mr. President, that I also resigned my membership from the NRA. I did that over a year ago because some of its fanatical members actually made threats against me and my staff if I did not vote their way. I will not lend my name to an organization which appears to cater to that kind of violent behavior.

I can also tell you, Mr. President, that views of the beltway NRA is not reflective of the majority of its members' attitudes. Certainly not the Coloradans who have been such dedicated and generous members.

Those NRA members would, I am certain, join me in condemning the irresponsible behavior of earlier this month.

I am personally highly offended that there is now a trend to politicize the tragedy in Oklahoma City. That was a heinous, terrible, criminal act. These responsible deserve nothing more than due process of law and total, complete, scorn from society. That was contemptible and it was barbarism.

It is almost equally contemptible to use that tragedy to further a political agenda. It does not matter what the agenda is, whether additional forms of gun control or whether it is an agenda of anti-governmentalism. To use that tragedy for political or personal advantage cheapens the lives of the innocent victims and it cheapens the rights protected by our Constitution.

The NRA is not the only national organization to use lies, hate, fear, or intimidation to generate contributions and to influence public policy. This is a phenomenon that has become quite popular among many groups who wish to influence national policy despite representing small, minority, views on a given issue.

However, I can think of no other organization in our history which has advocated acts of outright violence against the Government or law enforcement. That was a new low and I am relieved—somewhat—that the NRA

has at least apologized. Let's have no more.

The NRA held its national convention this week. To the NRA membership in Colorado and the Nation, I say: Take back your association before it is destroyed—before it destroys itself—from within.

RICHARD P. BUCKLEY—OUTSTANDING EDUCATOR FROM BROCKTON, MA

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, it is a privilege to take this opportunity to pay tribute to Richard P. Buckley of Brockton, MA, for his 35 years of outstanding service to education in Massachusetts.

Richard Buckley is retiring this year as title I coordinator in the Brockton Public Schools, a position he has held with great distinction since 1969. The Federal title I program that he administers provides vital support for improving the reading and mathematics skills of Brockton's disadvantaged students. He has also taught at the elementary, junior high, and high school levels, and as served as an elementary school assistant principal.

In addition to his duties in Brockton, Richard Buckley is also a member of the Massachusetts Chapter 1 Director's Advisory Council and the Massachusetts Department of Education Committee of Practitioners. He is an executive board member and two-time past president of the Council of Administrators of Compensatory Education.

Richard Buckley also served in the U.S. Army for many years. A graduate of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff School, he was Commander of the Boston Army Reserve Center and is now a retired colonel of the Army Reserve.

Throughout this extraordinary career, Richard Buckley has been a strong leader for high quality education for the students of Brockton. On the occasion of his retirement, I commend him for his remarkable service to his community and our country.

S. 768—ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT
REFORM AMENDMENTS

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, today, I rise to support S. 768, the Endangered Species Act Reform Amendments of 1995.

I wish to compliment Senator GORTON and Senator JOHNSTON on the thought and effort which has obviously gone into the crafting of this legislation.

Reform of the Endangered Species Act is way overdue, and I am very pleased that the Congress is finally addressing this issue in a substantive way. Field hearings on ESA reform will be underway next week under the guidance of my colleague from Idaho, Senator DIRK KEMPTHORNE, who chairs the subcommittee of jurisdiction within the Environment and Public Works Committee. I will be joining DIRK in